

Independent claim 34 is directed to a cutting chain comprising a plurality of cutter links with a strap length adjoining adjacent cutting length forming an endless chain. At least one cutter length of the cutting chain comprises a pair of side plates and a support member bridging the side plates. The support member has an arcuate support surface and is characterized by an unobstructed arcuate interior passage that extends substantially parallel to the direction of travel of the cutting chain. A drag plate is attached to the support member.

Independent claim 41 is directed to a cutting chain comprising a plurality of cutter links interconnected by strap links to form an endless chain. The cutting chain has at least one cutter link comprising a pair of side plates, a support member bridging the side plates and a pair of fastening members. A pair of fastening members are disposed adjacent to a drag plate and adapted to connect each side plate to a strap link. The drag plate is supported by the support member and is characterized as having depending side portions which shield the fastening members.

Each of Applicants' claims 1, 11, 34, and 41 are directed to a cutter link comprising a drag plate attached to a support member. The Examiner suggests Simmons shows a drag plate denoted by reference numeral 18. However, Simmons does not disclose this feature as claimed in Applicants' claims 1, 11, 34, and 41. As shown in Figure 1, Simmons is directed to a device for locking a cutting element within a chain block lug 11 using a rotary lock 18. The rotary lock has a cylindrical body that fits up against the arcuate intersurface of the block lug 11. Figures 2 and 6 of the Simmons reference further illustrate the use of rotary lock 18 to secure the shank 25 of the cutting element by rotation of the rotary lock 18 about its longitudinal axis. The shank 25 of the cutting element passes through the opening 16 in the block lug 11. The rotary lock 18 is arranged so that the rotary lock slot 22 is aligned with the block lug opening 16. When the openings 16 and 22 are aligned the shank 25 may be inserted through the openings so that the shank 25 is supported within the bore 20 of the rotary lock 18. The rotary lock 18 is turned about its longitudinal axis so that tapered sides 34 grip the shank 25. Clearly, the rotary lock 18 is merely a lock mechanism for the cutting element and is not a drag plate as is required in claims 1,

11, 34, and 41. There is no suggestion or teaching in Simmons of a cutter link comprising a drag plate attached to a support member as found in Applicants' claims 1, 11, 34, and 41. Consequently, claims 1, 11, 34, and 41 are **not** anticipated by Simmons, and the § 102(b) rejection of these claims must be withdrawn.

Claims 2-10 depend from claim 1 and include all of its features. Claims 12-21 depend from claim 11 and include all of its features. Claims 35-40 depend from claim 34 and include all of its features. Claims 42-46 depend from claim 41 and include all of its features. Thus, the dependent claims likewise are allowable over Simmons, and the § 102(b) rejection of claims 2-10, 12-21, 35-40, and 42-46 must be withdrawn.

Independent claim 22 is directed to a cutting chain comprising a plurality of cutter links forming an endless chain. Claim 22 requires that at least one cutter link comprise a plurality of cutting members supported by an arcuate support surface. Independent claim 28 is directed to a cutter link for a cutter chain. Like claim 22, claim 28 requires that the cutter link comprise a plurality of cutting members disposed on the arcuate support surface.

As previously discussed, Simmons is directed to a device for securing a cutting member to a chain block lug using a rotary lock disposed within the interior passage of the cutter block lug. Simmons does not, however, teach a cutter link comprising a plurality of cutting members. Simmons teaches, in Figure 2, varying positions at which a singular cutting member may be locked into the block lug. (See Simmons '980, Col. 4, ll. 11-21.) Therefore, Applicants' claims 22 and 28 are not anticipated by Simmons, and the § 102(b) rejection of these claims must be withdrawn.

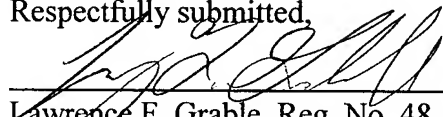
Claims 23-27 depend from claim 22, and claims 29-33 depend from claim 28. Thus, the dependent claims likewise are allowable over Simmons and the § 102(b) rejection of claims 23-27 and 29-33 must be withdrawn.

Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance courteously is solicited. In the event that there are any questions or

comments concerning this amendment or the application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

This is intended to be a complete response to the Office Action mailed September 5, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



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